Office of the Executive Council

Annual Report
2014-15

Newfoundland
Labrador

Table of Contents

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER	1
OVERVIEW	2
MANDATE	3
LINES OF BUSINESS	3
VISION	5
MISSION	5
REPORT ON PERFORMANCE	5
HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS	11
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES	14
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	15

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the Office of the Executive Council (OEC) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015. In keeping with the requirements of a Category 3 entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act,* this public report highlights achievements of the OEC in meeting 2014-15 objectives, as outlined in the 2014-17 Activity Plan.

The OEC has a primary mandate to support the decision-making processes of government by providing support and coordination to Cabinet and departments, making the OEC a critical facilitator of government's social and economic policy agenda and operations. In addition the OEC supports the public service to ensure the operations and management of government are effective and efficient.

Over the past year, work was initiated in important areas of policy capacity; planning and coordination; and governance and oversight of agencies, boards and commissions. The OEC will continue to work on these priorities over the next two years. In doing so, the OEC will enhance government's ability to innovate, while improving and modernizing our approach to public administration.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the employees of the OEC and their efforts and commitment in helping fulfill the office's many accomplishments this past fiscal year. This report was prepared under my direction and as Premier, I am accountable for the results reported.

HONOURABLE PAUL DAVIS
PREMIER

OVERVIEW

The Premier serves as the Minister of the Executive Council of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. As the Premier's department, the Office of the Executive Council (OEC), combined with the role of the Clerk of the Executive Council, plays a critical role in supporting the effective operation of government - including coordinating Cabinet operations and playing a leadership role to the public service.

The OEC's three key roles are: leadership, coordination, and the provision of advice and support. Many of the activities of the OEC focus on ensuring informed, effective decision-making and public sector management. These activities support the strategic priorities of government and ultimately contribute to the development and delivery of effective public services to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For the purpose of this annual report, the OEC includes:

- the Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat;
- the Lieutenant Governor's Establishment;
- the Policy Innovation and Accountability Office;
- the Communications Branch;
- the Protocol Office; and,
- the Financial Administration Division.

Other central agencies of the OEC, including the Human Resource Secretariat, the Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Office, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Office of Public Engagement, and the Women's Policy Office, that report to Ministers other than the Premier, prepare their own plans and reports in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Staff and Expenditures

The OEC has a staff complement of 70 (43 female and 27 male) and expended approximately $5.48 million for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015[1]. The details are as follows:

Central Agency	Staff Complement	2014-15 Expenditures
The Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat[2]	35	$3,018,306
Lieutenant Governor's Establishment	11	$538,434
Communications Branch	13	$1,141,738
Financial Administration	11	$782,450
TOTAL	70	$5,480,928

[1] Source for 2014-15 Expenditures: Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended 31 March 2015 (un-audited)

[2] Cabinet Secretariat includes the Protocol Office and the Policy Innovation and Accountability Office.

MANDATE

The mandate of the OEC is derived from government direction and informed by legislation. It includes the following:

- Support the Premier and the work of Cabinet and its Committees;
  - Facilitate, coordinate and support the Cabinet decision-making process, formulate orders, and communicate decisions of Cabinet;
  - Facilitate and coordinate advice and initiatives on matters related to economic policy, social policy, and government operations;
  - Facilitate and coordinate performance-based planning and reporting throughout government and its public bodies; and,
  - Facilitate and coordinate the Regulatory Reform Initiative and the Policy on Evaluation.
- Support the role of the Lieutenant Governor;
- Advise on protocol matters;
- Provide strategic communications, counsel and support to the Premier and Cabinet and coordinate government-wide communication activities; and,
- Provide leadership of the provincial public service to ensure that government has the policy, human resource, and management capacity it needs to develop and deliver effective policies and programs.

LINES OF BUSINESS

In fulfilling its mandate, the OEC provides the following lines of business:

1. Support to the Premier and Cabinet:

The OEC is the agency of the public service that provides support to the Premier's role of setting overall government policy, coordinating initiatives brought forward by ministers, and developing responses to government-level issues. The office is also the primary support for Cabinet and its Committees and provides for the effective and efficient operation of the Cabinet process. This role incorporates policy analysis, the preparation of briefing materials, the coordination and facilitation of Committee and Cabinet meetings, coordination of the legislative agenda, and the maintenance of Cabinet records. General operational support is also provided to the Office of the Premier.

2. On behalf of the Premier and Cabinet, the OEC also provides support and leadership to the public service through the following:

Planning and Coordination

The OEC ensures consistency in the application of government planning and coordination efforts as noted below:

Performance-based Planning and Reporting: The OEC leads and provides support and guidance to Provincial Government departments and public bodies in the development of multi-year performance-based plans and reports and reviews these documents to provide feedback on the degree to which they comply with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. The OEC also provides support services to ministers and deputy ministers in the development and monitoring of deputy ministers' performance contracts.

Regulatory Reform: The OEC leads and provides support and guidance to Provincial Government departments and public bodies on the implementation of the Regulatory Reform Initiative. This includes tracking and maintaining the regulatory count, providing analyses of the regulatory impact of policy proposals, and providing support and advice on the development of Regulatory Improvement Plans and Regulatory Impact Analyses.

Policy on Evaluation: The OEC leads and provides support to Provincial Government departments on the implementation of the Policy on Evaluation. This includes assisting departments and agencies in the development of evaluation plans and accountability frameworks, as well as providing evaluation advice on new and existing initiatives.

Capacity Development

The OEC ensures that the public service has the capacity and readiness to implement the directions of government. This is carried out by providing leadership in priority areas as noted below:

Policy Capacity: The OEC actively contributes to government's capacity for better informed and coordinated policy advice to Cabinet and executive decision-makers. By establishing a professional standard for policy development in government (the NL Policy Model – See Appendix A), strengthening a community of practice for policy practitioners through PolicyNL, and by facilitating ongoing networking and learning opportunities, the OEC is helping to enhance government's policy capacity and to encourage innovation which supports modern policy development and improved service delivery.

Recognition of Excellence: The Public Service Award of Excellence is a peer-nominated award and is presented annually by the Clerk of the Executive Council to employees of any department or central agency of government. It recognizes individuals and teams who have made outstanding contributions to the public service and is the highest honour an employee can receive from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Recipients of the Public Service Award of Excellence are selected by a committee made up of persons who are familiar with, but outside of, the public service.

Executive Development: The OEC provides executive development to ensure that the public service maintains and develops executive capacity. Development includes, but is not limited to: Executive Onboarding for new appointees to executive positions; learning plans; speaker series; and other learning and development activities and secondment opportunities in a variety of areas such as governance, planning and reporting, evaluation, and policy analysis.

Communications

The Communications Branch provides strategic communications counsel and support to the Premier, Cabinet and its Committees; manages corporate communications; co-ordinates communications activities across government; and manages government's corporate social media profile. Roles include developing communications and consultation policies and procedures; advising on communications and consultation planning; managing news release distribution services; overseeing government's web content standards; and providing multimedia communications support.

Provincial Brand Strategy

Through management of the provincial brand strategy, the Marketing and Brand Division leads government's exhibition presence at local, national and international trade shows and helps to establish Newfoundland and Labrador as one of the world's most enviable places to live, work, and do business.

3. Support to Lieutenant Governor and Other Dignitaries

The OEC provides executive, administrative, and household support to the Lieutenant Governor, including the care and operations of Government House. It also advises government members and departments on official matters of provincial, national and international protocol and organizes state and ceremonial events. The OEC organizes itineraries for visiting diplomats, heads of state, senior government representatives and other visitors, and coordinates flag and regalia ceremonies and protocols for local and national events.

4. Financial, Operational and Administrative Services

The Financial Administration Division provides financial management and advisory services to various departments/divisions within the corporate structure (OEC, the Department of Finance, the Public Service Commission and the Consolidated Fund Services). Responsibilities include the provision of financial, accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, and general operations services to the designated departments/divisions. The division also ensures that all employees are informed of departmental and general government guidelines and procedures relating to the above services.

VISION

A vision statement describes the ideal state an organization is striving to achieve in the long term. The vision of the OEC is based on the overarching goal of excellence in the public service, driven by accountability and innovation.

The vision of the Office of the Executive Council is of an accountable, innovative government demonstrating public service excellence.

MISSION

By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved the capacity of the public service to effectively manage the public sector in support of the implementation of government's agenda.

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

Issue 1: Policy Capacity

The OEC supports the development of policy capacity throughout the public service, ensuring that departments and individual policy practitioners have the skills and resources necessary to facilitate effective policy development and well-informed decision support.

In 2014-15, the OEC encouraged increased engagement and networking within the policy community by: launching a regular meeting for policy directors; enhancing the PolicyNL Marketplace (the NL policy community of practice) with an emphasis on resource sharing; and offering opportunities for policy professionals to gain knowledge and initiating discussions through the Policy Excellence Newsletter and Policy NL Coffee Breaks. Best practices and innovative ways of addressing complex issues were also explored through the delivery of a two day Public Administration Case Competition and professional development workshop that engaged new and current policy professionals. Interdisciplinary teams of new professionals developed a proposal to address emerging policy issues with the guidance of seasoned advisors. Additionally, new learning opportunities were developed in response to learning needs assessments conducted with policy professionals.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have enhanced the public service's capacity for policy development.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Office of the Executive Council will have initiated improvements to support policy capacity.

Measure: Initiated improvements to support policy capacity

Indicators	Accomplishments
Initiated a review of policy capacity initiatives	A review of policy capacity initiatives was initiated with an emphasis on the evaluation of PolicyNL, the NL policy community of practice. An accountability framework was developed which included both a logic model for outcomes analysis and a performance monitoring plan identifying key data required to gauge the effectiveness of PolicyNL to date. This included a comprehensive compilation of participation data on PolicyNL activities from 2012 to March 31, 2015. The evaluation plan developed for PolicyNL in 2014-15 will be implemented during 2015-16, with the evaluation expected to be completed by March 31, 2016.
Strengthened the PolicyNL community of practice, with a focus on new professionals	Given demographic trends toward an aging public service workforce, it is important to seek new and effective ways to engage the next generation of public servants. A policy/public administration case competition was implemented to help new

	professionals (those with less than five years work experience) learn about the policy process in a very tangible way. In conjunction with the case competition event, OEC worked with IPAC to deliver a one-day New Professionals Workshop aimed at providing new professionals with a forum to learn about public sector innovation and opportunities. The Case Competition and Workshop for New Professionals (NPs) were held on March 17-18, 2015. These events were the culmination of several months of planning and coordination. The Case Competition represented a valuable blending of interdisciplinary team building and networking as ten teams worked diligently to address nine policy/public administration issues. Each team produced a written policy proposal and delivered an oral presentation. The winner of the case competition was the team tackling the case entitled, "Government 3.0: How to Maximize the Future HR potential of the government of NL." Evaluation surveys conducted after the New Professionals Case Competition and Workshop indicated that the event was of considerable value for participants in terms of their roles with the public service.
Pursued new competency development opportunities for policy practitioners	The OEC works with the Centre for Learning and Development (CLD) to identify competency development opportunities (e.g. training and resources to support policy capacity). The Competency Framework for Policy Practitioners Learning Plan template assessed and identified competencies to determine whether these needs/gaps were aligned with current policy capacity initiatives. Policy divisions were approached to actively engage their employees in developing learning plans and to submit their plans to the CLD. To date, 148 policy-focused learning plans have been submitted to the CLD. Based on a review of the learning plans, it was determined that individual learning priorities span a large number of subject areas from management accountability and leadership to evaluation and change management. Following a review of plans and discussions with CLD, the public service online learning portal, maintained and administered by the CLD, was enhanced to include courses specifically for policy professionals. In addition, pertinent e-learning courses were made available including: Art of the 5 Minute Briefing; Public Engagement Fundamentals; and an overview of Access to Information and Protection of Privacy. The OEC will continue to encourage policy practitioners to develop formalized learning plans as a basis for assessing policy competencies; and will continue to work cooperatively with the CLD to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness of professional development opportunities within the public service to respond to other core policy competency needs.
Promoted networking and information sharing among policy professionals	Three theme-based editions of the Policy Excellence Newsletter (PEN) (an information sharing mechanism for policy practitioners) were issued in 2014-15 featuring articles about a variety of policy development topics (e.g. program evaluation, research and analysis). Networking/information sharing events were held as detailed below. Six PolicyNL Coffee Breaks were held covering the following topics: (i) Strategic Financial Management; (ii) Community Accounts; (iii) Public Engagement; (iv) Cultivating a Risk Intelligent Culture; (v) an Update on the NL Poverty Reduction

	Strategy; and (vi) a presentation about the MUN plan to enhance the *Yaffle* search engine. A total of 166 policy practitioners attended these sessions. With a goal to increase engagement and improve networking and professional development, the OEC also established a regular meeting for policy directors and equivalents in 2014-15. Quarterly meetings were held (facilitated by OEC) using a rotating chair format and a range of presentations (e.g. Cabinet decision-making process, Aboriginal Affairs). An Environmental Policy Case Competition was held in partnership with the Environmental Policy Institute of Memorial University's Grenfell Campus. This case competition broadened the PolicyNL network by linking together government policy practitioners with academics at Grenfell's Institute for Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science & Sustainability and graduate students in the Masters of Environmental Policy Program. The open exchange of information among all partners (by sharing written documents and through a mentoring process between students and government officials) was integral to the case preparation and ultimately the success of this initiative.
Developed resources on the Cabinet decision-making process	Over 2014-15, the OEC reviewed guidelines for the preparation of documents to better support government policy development and decision-making, including improvements to administrative processes. In addition, OEC, in consultation with the centre for Learning and Development (CLD), reviewed the Cabinet Decision-Making course that has been offered for several years through the CLD. Preliminary discussions in 2014-15 focused on the feasibility of developing an online course for policy practitioners and others in government and work was undertaken by the CLD to develop the course and bring it online in 2015-16.
Identified areas for improvement of information and documentation processes	In 2014-15 the OEC explored its management of information and documentation processes and adapted new technologies and practices to better facilitate the provision of information to Cabinet and its Committees. Some examples of improvements identified and/or implemented included: • Cabinet Secretariat implemented an Intranet, populated with reference material including policies and guidelines, position descriptions, operation manuals, presentations, templates and checklists. • A review of legacy cabinet records was conducted and as a result, a file conversion process is underway to convert approximately 33,000 electronic Cabinet submission documents from 1971 to 1995 to a readable format and add them to the Cabinet Secretariat database. The project is almost 50% complete with over 15,000 documents converted. • OEC issued a Departmental Guide for Ministerial records. This document was completed in consultation with the House of Assembly and The Rooms. • Meetings were held with divisions of Executive Council (Office of Public Engagement, Finance and Administration, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Office, Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency and Women's Policy Office) to provide guidance on records management and these divisions initiated development of a records classification system. The Financial Administration Division implemented an electronic folder classification system and developed records retention and disposal schedules, several of which have been submitted and approved by the Government Records Committee. Women's Policy Office implemented an electronic records management system. • A new public website for Cabinet Secretariat was launched.

In 2015-16, the OEC will build on the work carried out in 2014-15 to explore new and innovative methods of building policy capacity through evaluation of current methods, research, collaboration and increased networking and information sharing opportunities among policy practitioners.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Office of the Executive Council will have continued improvements to support policy capacity.

Measure: Continued improvements to support policy capacity

Indicators:

- Conducted an evaluation of PolicyNL
- Explored new directions and collaborated on best practices in policy development and continuous improvement in government
- Continued to promote networking and information sharing among policy professionals
- Identified areas for improvement of information and documentation processes

Issue 2: Planning and Coordination

Through the Policy Innovation and Accountability Office (PIAO) the OEC provides oversight of, and support to, departments and public entities in relation to performance-based planning and reporting requirements (accorded by the *Transparency and Accountability Act*), government's Policy on Evaluation and the Regulatory Reform Initiative. These processes help to ensure that government operates in a transparent and accountable manner; that programs and policies are evaluated for their efficacy and efficiency; and that regulations do not impose undue burden on the public.

In 2014-15, the OEC initiated a review of policies and processes that support these key mechanisms of accountability with an aim to streamline these planning and reporting requirements, improve administrative efficiencies and increase planning synergies. The OEC carried out stakeholder engagement, jurisdictional review and an examination of best practice to identify improvements that could be made to ensure that these processes are integrated across government and that their products are meaningful to the general public. In developing recommendations, the OEC considered the integrity and original intent of these processes while ensuring that they remain efficient, meaningful and relevant.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved planning and coordination requirements across government.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Office of the Executive Council will have commenced work to identify improvements to planning and coordination requirements.

Measure: Commenced work to identify improvements to planning and coordination requirements

Indicators	Accomplishments
Initiated a review of the policies that support the *Transparency and Accountability Act*	In order to initiate the planned review of policies that support the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, the OEC developed a comprehensive plan for research and consultation to be completed. This included review of performance-based planning and reporting practices in other jurisdictions, a literature review on the concept of public performance-based planning and reporting and stakeholder input.

	To ensure the review took into consideration all policy-based requirements that support the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, a policy inventory was completed to clearly define all of the key policies in place to inform and supplement legislative requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. These policy requirements were used to direct the jurisdictional analysis and consultation as well as the literature review. OEC proceeded to examine how the performance-based planning and reporting practices of other Canadian provinces and territories compared to those in place in Newfoundland and Labrador. OEC engaged counterparts across the country to obtain information on current practices and gain insight into perceived strengths and weaknesses of current systems of planning and reporting. In addition, a review of literature on public sector planning and reporting was also completed which helped identify concepts and best practices that support public sector planning. Lastly, OEC consulted with policy practitioners across government who have responsibility and experience with the ongoing implementation of government's performance-based planning and reporting framework. A survey was distributed to Accountability Coordinators in January to ask a variety of questions on the policies that support the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, and follow-up focus groups were held in February. The research and consultation (and subsequent analysis) consistently highlighted key ideas and concepts that OEC will consider in the coming year, including: the need for simplicity in planning and reporting frameworks, the rapidly changing environment in which governments currently operate, and the need to ensure the public audience is considered.
Developed recommendations regarding streamlining and refining regulatory reform and evaluation planning processes	Recommendations were developed in 2014-15 in the form of a draft policy to consolidate government's regulatory reform initiative and Evaluation Policy in an effort to reduce administrative burden and increase planning synergies.
Developed tools and training to support proposed changes to regulatory and evaluation planning processes	The recommendations reported above are under review and the development of tools and training will move forward in 2015-16.

The OEC will continue its work in 2015-16 to streamline regulatory reform and evaluation planning processes. In 2014-15, the OEC surveyed current practice to identify ways to improve planning and coordination processes and practices. In 2015-16, OEC will consider the work that was conducted in 2014-15 to identify recommendations to refine and clarify planning and coordination requirements.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Office of the Executive Council will have developed new policies, processes and practices which streamline and refine required planning and coordination processes.

Measure: Developed new policies, processes and practices

Indicators:

- Research and consultation findings considered
- New policies, processes and practices developed and implemented
- Resources developed to support new policies, processes and practices

Issue 3: Governance and Oversight of Agencies, Boards and Commissions

The OEC is responsible for providing oversight for appointments to and policies that support agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs). Members of ABCs are responsible for a broad range of administrative, adjudicative, regulatory, and advisory roles, many of which are linked to the provision of public programs and services. It has been estimated that the operating grants to ABCs represent approximately 55 per cent of total provincial program spending, and ABC staff comprise approximately 75 per cent of total provincial public sector employment. OEC's oversight responsibility was identified as a priority in the 2014-17 Activity Plan, the aim being to explore opportunities to provide oversight and supports for effective governance of ABCs. In 2014-15, the OEC initiated a review of current governance policies and practices, with a comparison to those in other jurisdictions and researched potential governance supports that could be provided to assist ABCs carrying out their mandates in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported effective governance by government's agencies, boards and commissions.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Office of the Executive Council will have assessed governance policies and practices for agencies, boards and commissions.

Measure: Assessed governance policies and practices

Indicators	Accomplishments
Initiated review of existing governance supports provided to agencies, boards and commissions	In order to review existing governance supports that are provided to ABCs, OEC developed a detailed survey which was distributed to government departments and entities that are responsible for providing support to ABCs. Survey responses provided a detailed impression of the current oversight and support functions and identified a number of potential areas in which ABCs supports could be enhanced. The survey and analysis completed in 2014-15 provided a comprehensive picture of the variety of processes and protocols employed currently across government and perhaps most valuably identified a number of potential supports that OEC can explore in the coming year.
Reviewed governance practices in other jurisdictions	A detailed jurisdictional analysis was undertaken regarding the governance and oversight of ABCs in Canadian Provinces and Territories. The review revealed a number of commonalities/trends. Among them: • The majority of provinces currently provide membership lists for ABCs through an online directory listing or a searchable database; and • A number of the Canadian provinces currently provide governance supports to their ABCs, although the level of support varies.
Explored potential governance supports for appointees	Based on the survey distribution as described above, respondents provided many ideas on how ABCs can be better supported including suggestions around a variety of resources that can enhance board governance capacity, facilitate effective oversight and ensure ABCs are managed in a transparent and accountable manner. From the jurisdictional scan, approximately half of the provinces reviewed currently provide governance supports to their ABCs. Ranging from online resources and links to governance materials to detailed courses and certification, there is no clear consistent

	approach employed across Canadian jurisdictions. Size of jurisdiction also plays a role in the level of support that is provided. OEC's preliminary analysis and exploration of ABC governance supports suggests that the approaches used in jurisdictions of comparable size are reasonable for implementation. In 2014-15 an appointment process template and guideline was developed for Departments. This ensures that the appointments process follows the established protocols. Ensuring clear administrative processes around appointments help ensure that ABC boards appointments are completed in a consistent manner and in doing so, support effective and accountable board composition.

Over this past year the OEC has established a working knowledge of the current landscape of ABC governance and oversight in comparison with other Canadian jurisdictions. In 2015-16, OEC will continue to explore ways to improve government's overall management of its ABCs by developing resources and continuing to make and/or propose changes to the ways government oversees the bodies that provide important administrative function of various capacities.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Office of the Executive Council will have developed revised policies and governance supports for agencies, boards and commissions.

Measure: Developed revised policies and governance supports

Indicators:

- Developed resources to support agency, boards and commissions
- Continued to explore agency, board and commission appointment practices
- Facilitated more transparent operation and oversight of government's agencies, boards and commissions

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Public Service Award of Excellence

The Public Service Award of Excellence is the highest honour an employee can receive from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Open to all employees, this award highlights excellence and outstanding job performance at both individual and team levels. It celebrates the exceptional work, commitment and creativity of employees who are making a notable contribution to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Each year, the Clerk of the Executive Council awards individuals and teams with the Public Service Award of Excellence during Public Service Week. Employees of any department or central agency of government are eligible for this award via peer-nomination. Recipients of the Public Service Award of Excellence are selected by a committee made up of persons who are familiar with, but outside of, the public service. In 2014-15 five individuals and one team were selected to receive the Public Service Award of Excellence as listed below.

Individuals:

- Crystal Breon – Environment and Conservation
- Sonja Drodge – Fire and Emergency Services – Newfoundland and Labrador
- Darrell O'Neill – Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development
- Chris Smith – Executive Council
- Marion Yetman – Health and Community Services

Team:

- Aquatic Animal Health Division - Fisheries and Aquaculture - Dr. Amanda Borchardt, Leah Hoskins, Deirdra Johnson, Angela Laing, Dr. Nicole O'Brien, Melanie Payne, Peter Roche, Jackie Rose, Trevor Rose, Dr. Daryl Whelan

Additional detail on this year's Public Service Awards of Excellence recipients can be found at:
http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/excellence/2014/recipients.html

Recipients of the 2015 Public Service Award of Excellence
Seated L-R: Chris Smith, Julia Mullaley - Clerk of the Executive Council, Honourable Paul Davis - Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Jackie Rose;
Middle Row L-R: Marion Yetman, Leah Hoskins, Angela Laing, Dr. Nicole O'Brien, Dr. Daryl Whelan, Trevor Rose;
Back Row L-R: Sonja Drodge, Dr. Amanda Borchardt, Peter Roche, Melanie Payne, Crystal Breon, Darrell O'Neill. Missing from photo: Deirdra Johnson

Protocol Office

In 2014-15, the Protocol Office coordinated a number of diplomatic and consular visits, including visits from:

(i) Mr. Tatsu Arai, Consul General of Japan
(ii) Mr. Sig Enrico Padula, Consul General of Italy
(iii) H.E. Cho Hee-yong, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea
(iv) H.E. Mona Brother, Ambassador of Norway
(v) H.E. Admiral (Ret'd) Nirmal Verna, High Commissioner for India
(vi) H.E. Howard Drake, High Commissioner of the United Kingdom
(vii) H.E. Werner Wnendt , Ambassador of Germany
(viii) H.E. Selcuk Unal, Ambassador of Turkey

(ix) Non-diplomatic visits were also coordinated for the United Kingdom Parliamentarians; Falkland Islands Parliamentarians; Hon. John P. McDonough, Secretary of State, Maryland (USA); Consulate Staff from the consulate office (USA); and a visit of the Taiwan-Economic & Cultural Office

Further accomplishments by the Protocol Office include the coordination of the 12th call for nominations for the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador; receiving and acknowledging applications and forwarding Newfoundland Volunteer War Service Medals; receiving, acknowledging and processing nominations for the Newfoundland and Labrador Award for Bravery; and conducting 109 tours (1,260 individuals) of the House of Assembly.

The Lieutenant Governor

In 2014-15, Their Honours, the Honourable Frank F. Fagan, and Mrs. Patricia Fagan, participated in numerous ceremonies and events. These included presiding over and hosting an Order of Newfoundland and Labrador Induction Ceremony; presenting awards and service recognition certificates to members of community and public service organizations; hosting events in honour of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the 2014 Honorary Graduates of Memorial University of Newfoundland; visiting communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to attend cultural events and honour the work of volunteers; officiating at swearing-in ceremonies for the Premier, Members of the House of Assembly and Members of Cabinet; hosting visits with Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Consul Generals; hosting events honouring the work of young people such as Scouts, Girl Guides, Allied Youth, UROCK Award winners, cadet groups, and the Youth Parliament; attending and hosting events honouring the contribution of veterans, members of the military and seniors; and, participating in commemoration events surrounding the 100th Anniversary of Newfoundland and Labrador's role in the Great War. Their Honours' work at Government House and throughout the province is supported by over 40 volunteer Aides-de-Camp and four volunteer tour guides. Further details on the activities of The Lieutenant Governor and Government House may be found online at www.govhouse.nl.ca.

Communications

The Communications Branch of the OEC led a number of key initiatives in 2014-15:

- The GovNL Twitter account continued to be used to provide timely information regarding Provincial Government policies, programs, services and initiatives. From April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 @GovNL twitter followers increased by 4,416 - from 8,583 to 12,762 which was a 51% increase.
- Government's social media presence was enhanced through increased usage of YouTube videos. In particular, an effort was made during Budget 2015 activities to develop other means to demonstrate the impact of budget initiatives to residents of the province, and to media. The strategy included the development of two page quick sheets, YouTube videos from key departments and a series of infographics which showed where funding was being committed.
- Communications branch coordinated closely with the Office of Public Engagement to launch the Open Government Initiative (OGI). This included a launch event, website and materials to support the initiative. The OGI is a government-wide effort aiming to: improve access to government information and data; enhance government's overall engagement of citizens and stakeholders; and strengthen collaboration between and among all sectors including government.
- A number of successful communications campaigns continued this year including "Foster a Future" and "Turn Back the Tide"
- The branch worked with departments across government to prepare and submit a number of applications to the International Association of Business Communicators Pinnacle Awards program. Two awards were won for the "Turn Back the Tide" climate change campaign, and one award was won for the "Foster a Future" campaign.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Leadership of the Public Service

As the lead entity for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's public service, the OEC has an integral role in ensuring that the public service is equipped to respond to citizen expectations of government. This role carries challenges for the OEC with respect to supporting the performance and delivery of programs and services, transparency and accountability regarding governance and decision-making, and ensuring the public service has the capacity to respond to the rapidly changing environment in which government operates. In recognition of these challenges, the OEC's 2014-17 Activity Plan has identified plans to actions policy capacity needs, to improve planning and coordination across government, and to better support governance of agencies, boards, and commissions.

Continuous Improvement

To ensure the public service is operating in the most efficient manner, it is critical that governments strive to continuously improve their internal business processes. One continuous improvement methodology, often referred to as 'Lean' is now gaining momentum in public administration. Lean methodologies can be used to minimize waste and maximize value for departments and the public. The OEC is currently working with other government departments to explore opportunities to incorporate and expand Lean techniques into their business processes. These techniques complement the OEC's existing efforts in the areas of regulatory reform and evaluation, as these initiatives also focus on reducing regulatory burden, enhancing service delivery, and making business processes (including programs/services) more effective and efficient. In coming years, the OEC will aim to improve planning and coordination processes across government through the development of policies that further streamline and refine existing processes.

Innovation

Demographic shifts, heightened citizen expectations, increased fiscal pressures, and environmental factors are presenting unprecedented challenges to governments around the world to find more effective and innovative solutions to increasingly complex social and economic issues. In this regard, the OEC has worked with various partners in recent years to foster dialogue and interaction aimed at strengthening innovation in the public service (e.g.Policy NL initiatives). The OEC will continue to investigate and explore ways to incorporate innovation into the provincial government as well as its policies, programs and services in order to better serve the public.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Expenditures and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidate Revenue Fund for Fiscal year Ended 31 March 2015 (unaudited) and the Estimates 2015.

	Actual [3] $	Revised [4] $	Original [4] $
The Lieutenant Governor's Establishment			
Government House	581,009	590,000	647,900
Cabinet Secretariat			
Executive Support	1,736,052	1,775,400	1,640,000
Planning and Coordination	840,654	847,100	960,000
Economic and Social Policy Analysis	604,579	606,600	783,800
Protocol	169,092	174,200	253,400
Public Service Development	22,303	22,400	28,800
	3,406,453	**3,425,700**	**3,666,000**
Communications Branch	1,566,500	1,692,900	2,343,400
Financial Administration	809,715	818,100	1,010,100
Total: Office of the Executive Council	**6,363,677**	**6,526,700**	**7,667,400**

[3] Provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2015 (unaudited)
[4] Provided in the 2015 Estimates